

1      **CLAIMS:**

2      1. A method of forming a gated semiconductor assembly,  
3 comprising:

4              forming a silicon nitride layer over and contacting against a  
5 floating gate; and

6              forming a control gate over the silicon nitride layer.

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8      2. The method of claim 1 further comprising:

9              forming a silicon dioxide layer over the silicon nitride layer; and

10             forming the control gate over the silicon dioxide layer.

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12     3. A method of forming a gated semiconductor assembly,  
13 comprising:

14              forming a silicon nitride layer over a substrate, the silicon nitride  
15 layer comprising a first portion and a second portion elevationally  
16 displaced from the first portion, the first portion having less electrical  
17 resistance than the second portion; and

18              forming a transistor gate over the silicon nitride layer.

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20     4. The method of claim 3 further comprising:

21              forming a floating gate layer over the substrate; and

22              forming the silicon nitride layer over the floating gate layer.

1           5. The method of claim 3 further comprising:  
2           forming a floating gate layer over the substrate;  
3           forming the silicon nitride layer over the floating gate layer; and  
4           patterning the floating gate layer and the silicon nitride layer into  
5           a floating gate shape..

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7           6. The method of claim 3 wherein the second portion of the  
8           silicon nitride layer is over the first portion, the method further  
9           comprising:

10           forming a silicon dioxide layer over said second portion; and  
11           forming the control gate over the silicon dioxide layer.

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13           7. The method of claim 6 wherein the forming the silicon  
14           dioxide layer comprises growing the silicon dioxide from silicon of the  
15           second portion of the silicon nitride layer.

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17           8. The method of claim 3 wherein the silicon nitride layer  
18           comprises at least one sidewall, and wherein the second portion is over  
19           the first portion, the method further comprising:

20           forming a silicon dioxide layer over said second portion and along  
21           the at least one sidewall of the silicon nitride layer; and  
22           forming the transistor gate over the silicon dioxide layer.

1           9. The method of claim 8 wherein the forming the silicon  
2       dioxide layer comprises growing the silicon dioxide from silicon of the  
3       first and second portions of the silicon nitride layer.

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5           10. The method of claim 3 wherein the forming the silicon  
6       nitride layer comprises:

7           chemical vapor depositing the first portion utilizing a first mixture  
8       having a first ratio of a silicon precursor gas to a nitrogen precursor  
9       gas; and

10           chemical vapor depositing the second portion utilizing a second  
11       mixture having a second ratio of the silicon precursor gas to the  
12       nitrogen precursor gas, the first ratio being greater than the second  
13       ratio.

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15           11. The method of claim 10 wherein the chemical vapor  
16       depositings of the first and second portions occur in a common and  
17       uninterrupted deposition process.

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1           12. A method of forming a gated semiconductor assembly,  
2 comprising:

3           forming a silicon nitride layer over a substrate, the silicon nitride  
4 layer comprising a first portion and a second portion displaced from the  
5 first portion, the first portion having a greater stoichiometric amount of  
6 silicon than the second portion; and

7           forming a gate over the silicon nitride layer.

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9           13. The method of claim 12 further comprising incorporating the  
10 gate into one of an EPROM or EEPROM device as a control gate.

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12           14. A method of forming a gated semiconductor assembly,  
13 comprising:

14           forming a silicon nitride layer over a substrate, the silicon nitride  
15 layer comprising a first portion and a second portion elevationally  
16 displaced from the first portion, the first portion having a greater  
17 stoichiometric amount of silicon than the second portion; and

18           forming a transistor gate over the silicon nitride layer.

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20           21. The method of claim 14 wherein the second portion of the  
21 silicon nitride layer is over the first portion, the method further  
22 comprising:

23           24. forming a silicon dioxide layer over said second portion; and  
              forming the transistor gate over the silicon dioxide layer.

16. The method of claim 15 wherein the forming the silicon  
dioxide layer comprises growing the silicon dioxide from silicon of the  
second portion of the silicon nitride layer.

17. The method of claim 14 wherein the silicon nitride layer  
comprises at least one sidewall, and wherein the second portion is over  
the first portion, the method further comprising:

forming a silicon dioxide layer over said second portion and along  
the at least one sidewall of the silicon nitride layer; and  
forming the transistor gate over the silicon dioxide layer.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein the forming the silicon  
dioxide layer comprises growing the silicon dioxide from silicon of the  
first and second portions of the silicon nitride layer.

19. A method of forming a gated semiconductor assembly,  
comprising:

forming a floating gate layer over a substrate;  
forming a silicon nitride layer over the floating gate layer, the  
silicon nitride layer comprising a first portion and a second portion  
elevationally displaced from the first portion, the first portion having a  
greater stoichiometric amount of silicon than the second portion; and  
forming a control gate over the silicon nitride layer.

1           20. The method of claim 19 further comprising:  
2           forming a silicon dioxide layer over the substrate; and  
3           forming the floating gate layer over the silicon dioxide layer.

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5           21. The method of claim 19 further comprising patterning the  
6           floating gate layer into a floating gate shape after forming the silicon  
7           nitride layer.

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9           22. The method of claim 19 wherein the forming the silicon  
10          nitride layer comprises:

11          chemical vapor depositing the first portion utilizing a first mixture  
12          having a first ratio of a silicon precursor gas to a nitrogen precursor  
13          gas; and

14          chemical vapor depositing the second portion utilizing a second  
15          mixture having a second ratio of the silicon precursor gas to the  
16          nitrogen precursor gas, the first ratio being greater than the second  
17          ratio.

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19           23. The method of claim 22 wherein the chemical vapor  
20          depositing the first portion occurs before the chemical vapor depositing  
21          the second portion.

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1           24. The method of claim 22 wherein the chemical vapor  
2 depositing the first portion and the chemical vapor depositing the  
3 second portion occur in a common and uninterrupted deposition process.

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5           25. The method of claim 22 wherein the floating gate layer  
6 comprises polycrystalline silicon.

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8           26. The method of claim 22 wherein the forming the floating  
9 gate layer comprises:

10           chemical vapor depositing amorphous silicon; and  
11           thermally treating the amorphous silicon to form polycrystalline  
12 silicon.

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14           27. The method of claim 19 wherein the floating gate layer  
15 comprises at least one of amorphous silicon and polycrystalline silicon,  
16 and wherein the forming the floating gate layer and the forming the  
17 silicon nitride layer occur in a common and uninterrupted chemical  
18 vapor deposition process.

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1           28. The method of claim 19 further comprising:

2           forming a silicon dioxide layer over the substrate;

3           forming the floating gate layer over the silicon dioxide layer, the  
4           floating gate layer comprising at least one of amorphous silicon and  
5           polycrystalline silicon;

6           forming the first portion of the silicon nitride layer by chemical  
7           vapor depositing utilizing a first mixture having a first ratio of a silicon  
8           precursor gas to a nitrogen precursor gas; and

9           forming the second portion of the silicon nitride layer over the  
10           first portion by chemical vapor depositing utilizing a second mixture  
11           having a second ratio of the silicon precursor gas to the nitrogen  
12           precursor gas, the first ratio being greater than the second ratio, the  
13           chemical vapor depositing the first portion and the chemical vapor  
14           depositing the second portion occurring in a common and uninterrupted  
15           deposition process;

16           after forming the first and second portions of the silicon nitride  
17           layer, forming a patterned photoresist layer over and against the second  
18           portion of the silicon nitride layer;

19           transferring a pattern from the patterned photoresist layer to the  
20           polycrystalline silicon and the first and second portions of the silicon  
21           nitride layer to form a stack comprising the patterned floating gate  
22           layer and the patterned first and second portions of the silicon nitride  
23           layer, the stack having at least one sidewall;

1 growing a silicon dioxide layer over the second portion and along  
2 the at least one sidewall of the stack; and  
3 forming the control gate over the silicon dioxide layer.

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5 29. The method of claim 28 wherein the patterned photoresist  
6 layer is formed against the silicon nitride layer, wherein the patterned  
7 photoresist is formed by exposing a photoresist material to light, and  
8 wherein the silicon nitride layer is utilized as an antireflective material  
9 during the exposure of the photoresist material to light.

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11 30. A method of forming a semiconductor assembly, comprising:  
12 forming a first material layer over a substrate;  
13 forming a silicon nitride layer over the first material layer, the  
14 silicon nitride layer comprising a first portion and a second portion  
15 elevationally displaced from the first portion, the first portion having a  
16 greater stoichiometric amount of silicon than the second portion;  
17 forming a photoresist layer over the silicon nitride layer;  
18 patterning the photoresist layer, the patterning comprising exposing  
19 portions of the layer of photoresist to light and utilizing the silicon  
20 nitride layer as an antireflective material during the exposing; and  
21 transferring the pattern from the patterned photoresist to the  
22 silicon nitride layer and the first material layer.

1           31. The method of claim 30 wherein the first material layer  
2 comprises at least one of polycrystalline silicon and amorphous silicon.

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4           32. The method of claim 30 wherein the forming the silicon  
5 nitride layer comprises:

6           chemical vapor depositing the first portion utilizing a first mixture  
7 having a first ratio of a silicon precursor gas to a nitrogen precursor  
8 gas; and

9           chemical vapor depositing the second portion utilizing a second  
10 mixture having a second ratio of the silicon precursor gas to the  
11 nitrogen precursor gas, the first ratio being greater than the second  
12 ratio.

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14           33. The method of claim 32 wherein the chemical vapor  
15 depositing the first portion and the chemical vapor depositing the  
16 second portion occur in a common and uninterrupted deposition process.

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18           34. A gated semiconductor assembly, comprising:

19           a silicon nitride layer over and contacting against a floating gate;  
20 and

21           a control gate over the silicon nitride layer.

1                   35. The gated semiconductor assembly of claim 34 further  
2 comprising a silicon dioxide layer between the silicon nitride layer and  
3 the control gate.

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5                   36. A gated semiconductor assembly, comprising:  
6                   a silicon nitride layer over a substrate, the silicon nitride layer  
7 comprising a first portion and a second portion elevationally displaced  
8 from the first portion, the first portion having less electrical resistance  
9 than the second portion; and  
10                  a gate over the silicon nitride layer.

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12                  37. The gated semiconductor of claim 36 wherein the gate is  
13 a control gate of an EPROM or an EEPROM device.

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15                  38. The gated semiconductor of claim 36 further comprising:  
16                  the second portion of the silicon nitride layer being over the first  
17 portion;  
18                  a silicon dioxide layer over said second portion; and  
19                  the control gate being over the silicon dioxide layer.

1           39. A gated semiconductor assembly comprising:

2           a silicon nitride layer over a substrate, the silicon nitride layer  
3           comprising a first portion and a second portion elevationally displaced  
4           from the first portion, the first portion having a greater stoichiometric  
5           amount of silicon than the second portion; and

6           a transistor gate over the silicon nitride layer.

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8           40. The gated semiconductor of claim 39 further comprising:

9           the second portion of the silicon nitride layer being over the first  
10          portion;

11          a silicon dioxide layer over said second portion; and

12          the transistor gate being over the silicon dioxide layer.

13

14          41. A gated semiconductor assembly comprising:

15          a substrate;

16          a polycrystalline silicon layer over the substrate;

17          a silicon nitride layer over the polycrystalline silicon layer, the  
18          silicon nitride layer comprising a first portion and a second portion  
19          elevationally displaced from the first portion, the first portion having a  
20          greater stoichiometric amount of silicon than the second portion; and

21          a control gate over the silicon nitride layer.

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23          42. The gated semiconductor of claim 41 wherein the first  
24          portion is over the second portion.

1           43. The gated semiconductor of claim 41 wherein the second  
2 portion is over the first portion.

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4           44. A gated semiconductor assembly comprising:  
5           a substrate;  
6           a floating gate over the substrate;  
7           a control gate over the floating gate; and  
8           an electron barrier layer between the floating gate and the control  
9           gate, the electron barrier layer comprising a silicon nitride layer, the  
10           silicon nitride layer comprising a first portion and a second portion  
11           elevationally displaced from the first portion, the first portion having a  
12           greater stoichiometric amount of silicon than the second portion.

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14           45. The gated semiconductor of claim 44 wherein the first  
15 portion is over the second portion.

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17           46. The gated semiconductor assembly of claim 44 wherein the  
18           electron barrier layer further comprises a silicon dioxide layer between  
19           the control gate and the silicon nitride layer.

1           47. The gated semiconductor assembly of claim 44 wherein the  
2 floating gate comprises polycrystalline silicon and has at least one  
3 sidewall, and wherein the silicon nitride layer has at least one sidewall,  
4 the assembly further comprising a layer of dioxide extending along said  
5 sidewalls of the silicon nitride layer and the polycrystalline silicon.

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